

FTC Consumer Alert

Federal Trade Commission ■ Bureau of Consumer Protection ■ Office of Consumer and Business Education

Fraud on the Line: Avoiding “Do Not Call” Scams

Many consumers who want to get fewer telemarketing calls have signed up with a state “Do Not Call” registry, the Direct Marketing Association’s Telemarketing Preference Service or individual company “Do Not Call” lists.

Consumer protection officials say that rip-off artists have begun to take advantage of the popularity of these services to trick consumers into giving up personal information, such as their Social Security number, bank account number, credit card number or telephone calling card number. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has proposed creating a national “Do Not Call” list, but it has not yet been implemented.

Here’s how the scam works: someone calls you claiming to represent a “Do Not Call” registry or the FTC. The phony registry “official” asks for your personal information, supposedly to verify that you want to be on the “Do Not Call” list. The caller is a con artist who could use your personal information to run up debts in your name or otherwise steal your identity. The FTC says that once a consumer signs up with a “Do Not Call” registry, there is no need to confirm personal information. And you will never receive an unsolicited call to be put on a “Do Not Call” registry.

The FTC’s Bureau of Consumer Protection says consumers can avoid these scams. Their suggestions:

- Don’t share your personal information if someone calls you claiming to represent a “Do Not Call” registry, an organization to stop fraud or even the FTC itself. In fact, don’t even stay on the line.
- Keep information about your bank accounts and credit cards to yourself — including the numbers, unless you know who you’re dealing with.
- Never share your Social Security number with a person you don’t know.
- If you receive such a call, report it to your state Attorney General’s office or to the FTC at www.ftc.gov or toll-free at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

For more information on how to reduce unwanted telemarketing calls, visit www.ftc.gov/donotcall. If you believe that your personal information may have been compromised, visit www.consumer.gov/idtheft.

The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit www.ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.

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1-877-FTC-HELP	www.ftc.gov

June 2002